(b) what were the reasons or circumstances which led Government to take such steps which were not mentioned in the budget; and

(c) what are the reasons for not having included such steps in the budget itself?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) to (c) The fiscal proposals are announced in the Budget Speech and the Finance Bill. Modifications, wherever necessary, are carried out in response to the views expressed by the Hon'ble Members of Parliament and also by the different sections of the Indian Community such as trade, Industry and agriculture etc. The position in respect of measures both in the field of direct taxes and indirect taxes and the measures announced in the sphere of monetary policy are given below:

Fiscal Measures: Direct Taxes: A number of notifications have been issued and amendments made in the rules in pursuance of the proposals contained in the Finance Act as passed by the Parliament and by virtue of the powers contained in Direct Taxes Acts in regard to delegated legislation. Copies of all the notifications etc. are placed on the Table of the House in accordance with the laid down procedure.

Indirect Taxes: During the period between the presentation of the Budget and the passing of the Finance Bill, most of the changes related to items in respect of which some changes were made in budget. In those cases, the changes were announced taking into account the suggestions received from general public, trade, industry and the suggestions made by Hon'ble Members of Parliament in the course of the general debate on the Budget. Some other changes like exemption from customs duty on raw cotton, sugar etc. were made taking into account factors like demand and supply position, international and domestic prices, etc. As regards the post budget changes are concerned, it may be stated that it is not possible to envisage all the fiscal reliefs at the time of Budget. These changes are made taking into account the merits of the requests received, the recommendations or suggestions made by the administrative Ministry, emerging demand and supply position, price fluctuations and other relevant considerations. If the circumstances so warrant the change is made without waiting for the next budget.

Monetary Measures: In the sphere of monetary policy apart from the follow-up action taken by the RBI on Budget announcements: it has been the practice with the Reserve Bank of India to announce its credit policy separately for the first half of the financial year in April and for the second half in October. The measures announced by the RBI include (i) reduction in Statutory Liquidity Ratio from 34:75 per cent to 31.5 per cent; (ii) increase in Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR), from 14 per cent to 15 per cent and introduction of 7.5 per cent CRR on deposits under Foreign Currency (Non-Resident) Accounts Scheme; (iii) deregulation of interest rates on term loans and working capital advances of over Rs. 2 lakh and (iv) deregulation of deposit and lending rates of all co-operative banks subject to the minimum lending rate of 12 per cent.

Pending Cases of Insurance Claims

*195. SHRI INDER KUMAR GUJRAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of insurance claims arising out of car theft and car accident cases pending with the different Insurance Companies;

(b) whether it is a fact that the procedural delays in settling the claims are against the interest of insurers;

(c) whether Government are contemplating any reforms to ensure time bound settlement of these claims; if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) 68,087 as on 31-3-1994.

(b) Insurance companies have laid down the minimum procedure required for safeguarding the interests of the insurers and the insured.

(c) and (d) The Malhotra Committee Report on Reforms in the Insurance Sector contains certain recommendations for expediting settlement of claims. These recommendations are under active consideration of the Government.

Selection of TV Newsreaders

*196. SHRI TINDIVANAM G. VENKATRAMAN: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) what are the norms followed in the selection of newsreaders in TV; and

(b) what are the requisite qualifications prescribed by the Department and their emoluments per month/per day?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO): (a) and (b) Applications are invited from persons interested in empannelment as newsreaders with Doordarshan through announcements on Doordarshan. The candidate has to be a graduate with journalistic experience, between 21—35 years of age and also a resident of the area where the Doordarshan Kendra is located. After scrutiny of applications, the eligible candidates are called for interviews to